The Second SPIRA:

Being a fearful Example of

An Atheist,

Who had Apostatized from the Christian Religion, and died in Despair at *Westminster*, *Decemb.* 8. 1692.

With an Account of his Sickness, Convictions, Discourses with Friends and Ministers: and of his dreadful Expressions and Blasphemies when he left the World.

As also a Letter from an Atheist of his Acquaintance, with his Answer to it.

Publish'd for an Example to others, and recommended to all young Persons, to settle them in their Religion.

By J. S. a Minister of the *Church of England*, a frequent Visitor of him during his whole Sickness.

The Fourth Edition, with a remarkable Occurrence further clearing the Matter of Fact.

London, Printed for *John Dunton* at the *Raven* in the *Poultry*. 1693.

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Edm. Bohun.

The Preface.

BEing often importuned by ſeveral of my nearer Acquaintance, to publiſh the following *Relation*, as an account that might be very uſeful to the Publick, particularly againſt *Profaneneſs and Atheiſm*; and finding my Buſineſs at preſent very

urgent upon me, I have at last yielded to give the *Papers* and *Notes* which I took during the *whole Visitation*, to a Friend of mine, to put 'em in some kind of Method and Order for the Press: And having examined the Piece, now 'tis perfected, with the *Original Notes* and *Papers* which I drew my self, I find the Substance and material Part very faithfully done. It

It cannot be expected by the Reader that the Stile and Words are *verbatim* the same as delivered, especially the *two Letters*, which are in the following Tract, but as far as I remember, and as my Notes will assist me, (in taking of which I us'd all the Sincerity and Care I could) I dare affirm that there's nothing *material left out*,

nor is there any interpolations which are not genuine, I mean such as do not add to the Sense, but only expatiate in order to give a plainer Notion and Idea of the Matter: But as to what that *Miserable Gentleman delivered himself* (who is the Subject of this Relation) both I and the METHODIZER of my Notes have been *superstitiously Critical* to give

give them as near the Truth, and very Expreſſions, as we could, believing the Reader would not be diſpleas'd to have as Nice and Exact Account of that part of the *Treatiſe* as poſſibly could be met with.

There's another thing which the Reader will not be ſorry to find, which is; That whereas in *dreadful*, *ſurprizing Relations*, the *Bookſeller*, *Author*, or both

both together, do usually clog the Matter of Fact with long and tedious Observations, impertinent Reflections & such like *Stuff*, only to make the Volume swell; here he will find no needless or trifling Digressions, but *unmixt Relation*, barely and *purely* deliver'd, so that the Reader all the while he reads, will be upon his Subject, and not per-

perplex'd with an Expectation of it.

I've no more to add but this, That I'm willing to hope and believe this *Treaaiſe* may be a means to ſtartle ſome that are *Atheiſtically Inclin'd*; and perhaps reclaim others, who by ſeeing this, may conclude it their Intereſt, *Rather to be a thoughtful Reader of ſuch an Hiſtory, than to be ſuch an Hiſtory themſelves.* And as for other *Young People*, whoſe Converſe in the World has not yet given them the unhappy Acquaintance of our *Modern Atheiſts or their Principles*, this may be a Spur to their Diligence, and a Warning to keep them from the dreadful Sin of APOSTATISING.

J. S.

I *Am sensible enough that this Age has a deal of* Curiosity *and little* Charity *in it, not but that every one, who by Imprudence, Accident, or otherwise, gives any just Occasion for others to be Uncharitable, is oblig'd in Justice to remove it, or be content to bear it.*

I shall therefore, so far as I am concern'd, give that Account to the World which I have done to several Eminent Divines *and* Gentlemen, *who have been with me for Satisfaction in this Affair,* viz.

The Divine, *whom I believe to be a* Person of Integrity, *and from whom I receiv'd the* Minutes, *(which I have thus Methodiz'd) having mentioned 'em to me, I became importunate for their Publication, which he declin'd several times, urging his Dependance upon the* Family, *and the Ill Consequence it might have, in respect of his* Fortunes, *perhaps of his* Life. *At last he consented, upon my Solemn Promise not to discover him, and upon assuring him, that only the* two first Letters *of his Name should be printed; all this time retaining from me a knowledge of the Family. So soon as I had put the* Original Papers *in that* little Order *the World now finds them, he desir'd he might have all back, to compare the* finisht Piece *with the* Original Notes; *which he did, and wrote the* Preface, *acquitting me of any* Additions, Interpolations, *&c. With this* Preface, *amongst other things, he sent me a* Letter *(which afterwards he told me he design'd to send by it self, and therefore it was sealed up). The Letter is as follows:* (The Original may be seen at the Booksellers.) *S I R,*

SIR,

I Had Your's, with the Manuſcript, and having compar'd it with the *Memoirs* I took, I think you have done Me, and the Caſe of that miſerable Man, a *rigid Juſtice.*

As to the *Preface* you mention'd in Your's, if the following will be any Service to you, you are free to it. Let only the *two firſt Letters* of my Name be printed at the latter end of the *Preface.* In the *Title Page* you may alſo ſay, *By* J. S. *a Miniſter of the Church of* England, *a frequent Viſitor during the whole Sickneſs*, or ſomething like it. I'm going down into *Eſſex*, and as ſoon as I return, I'll ſee your Bookſeller, of whom I expect to receive half a dozen Books.

Decemb. 26. 1692. *Your real Friend and Servant,* J. S.

The Book being printed, ſeveral Divines and others, *who were very willing to have a good Atteſtation, came to enquire of the* Bookſeller and of me *about it, and I alſo being very deſirous the World might be* fully ſatisfied *in it, (the Relation beginning to make ſuch an unexpected Noiſe) purſu'd my Author, at his return out of* Eſſex, *with continual Importunities of Publiſhing all he knew of the whole Matter, with the Circumſtances of* Perſons *and* Place, *preſſing the* Concern of Religion, my own Reputation, and the Bookſeller's, *(who is hereby ſufficiently acquitted from any unfair dealing in the Caſe) to which (as near as I can remember, and as I have told ſome in Town, whoſe* Friendſhip I moſt value) *he anſwer'd, That he was coldly receiv'd at his*

return

return, and loaded with the Epithets of Ingrateful Promiſe-breaker, *&c. For he had promis'd them not to make the Concern publick, (which indeed he has not in the moſt material Points): Beſides, he tells me of ſome* private Threats *that he has heard, in caſe he betrays the Family to the* Publick Ignomy of ſuch a Relation; *and he ſays he is ſufficiently aſſur'd, that thoſe Divines and Doctors he ſaw with the* ſick Perſon, *have been dealt with under-hand, or elſe the Buſineſs muſt certainly have come to light before now. I told him, that I believ'd his* dependance *on the Family (which he told me had many Branches, and this Gentleman was unknown to him before that time) was not abſolutely neceſſary, ſince I doubted not (for I have heard it promis'd) but that he would meet with a* Patron, *in caſe he ſhould be expell'd. He anſwer'd to this, That if all other Teſtimonies were taken off but his, he might reaſonably fear, being unjuſtly degraded, or* Eternal Impriſonment, *and ſuch an* Action of Scandal, *that would ruin (or at leaſt inconvenience) ſeveral* Patrons *with him; how good this Argument is I know not, having very little Acquaintance in Law Matters: I told him, That ſeveral things lookt ſuſpiciouſly in it, as that it ſhould come out* by none of all thoſe *that were preſent, beſides him. To which he anſwer'd as before, That he was confident they were all* adjur'd ſilence, *by Promiſes, Threats, or ſome other Methods ſuitable to their Qualities. I told him, That many ſuſpect, that Mr.* F —— N —— *was the Perſon: He proteſted he was not. Here were other things of this nature that paſt betwixt us, in all which I diſcover'd him mighty uneaſie and* apprehenſive *of* further Miſchief, *continually renewing his* Injunction *and my* Promiſe *of not*

re-

revealing any thing, if by any fortuitous or unguarded Expreſſion, I had diſcovered the Family.

As for my particular, *I know well enough, that my* own Integrity and Reputation *is the Hinge upon which the Relation chiefly moves, and I am very willing that any* Divine, Gentleman, *or other Perſon whatever, ſhould have the Liberty of Examining* who and what I am, *of all my acquaintance, and if my Credit hitherto appears* unſpotted and free, *and not ſtain'd with* baſe, little and diſhonourable Actions, *I hope I ſhall have that* common Charity *in this Affair which every one would be unwilling to be deny'd, were he in my circumſtances. The* Bookſeller *will give any one an account of my* Lodgings, *where they may have means for further ſatisfaction upon this* laſt Head. *So that I think there's no neceſſity of ſubſcribing my Name to this Apology.*

This is the fulleſt Account the World is to expect from what I at preſent know in this Affair, and if I receive any further light into it hereafter, I ſhall ſoon make it publick, for my own credit, and the ſatisfaction of others.

THe Methodizer *of this Hiſtory, being a Perſon of* great Integrity, *the Reader has no reaſon to queſtion the truth of this printed* Atteſtation *he has here given concerning it; and what commendation I ſhall give of it, will be ſerviceable no longer than till thou haſt peruſed it through;* Thou wilt find ſuch Wine in it as needs no Buſh. *This only I ſhall ſay, it well deſerves thy*

ſerious

ſerious and frequent Peruſal; and I heartily wiſh thoſe pious Gentlemen that have Eſtates would be inſtrumental in diſperſing of it throughout the whole Kingdom, *that ſo all ranks of Men, eſpecially the* Youth *of this Nation, might reap ſome advantage by this* extraordinary *and amazing Inſtance. This is the Sentiment and hearty Deſire of thy cordial Friend in the Lord,* R. Wolley, *M. A.*

February the 1ſt. 169$\frac{2}{3}$.

A Gentlewoman came into Mr. *Dunton*'s Shop, between three and four a Clock, and ſaid, She knew the *Second Spira*, and was acquainted with the Family to which he belonged.

Witneſs my Hand, Joſeph Poole.

February the 1ſt. 169$\frac{2}{3}$.

A Gentlewoman come into Mr. *Dunton*'s Shop, in Company with another Perſon, and ſaid, She knew the *Second Spira*, and was acquainted with the Family; and when he importunately woo'd her to tell him who the Perſon was, ſhe ſaid, ſhe would not diſcover the Perſon or Family, but that the Truth of it would be acknowledged in a little time.

Witneſs my Hand, Ananias Hodges.

Theſe two Perſons live in *Crutched Fryers* near the *Pump*.

The ſecond SPIRA.

THat Examples prevail above Precepts can be no Surpriſe to any one that conſiders the rarity of them, or that moſt of the Senſes being at once imployed they ſhould make ſo ſtrong an Impreſſion upon the Brain, and ſo upon the Underſtanding, according to the manner of Human Perception.

The preſent Inſtance, whoſe Relation I have undertaken, having made ſo deep an Impreſſion upon my own Mind, I could not think, but that if all Men participate of the ſame Nature as I do, but that they muſt be equally affected with it,

ſome Allowance being made for this, That what I my ſelf ſaw and heard actually, I communicate by way of Relation to others.

I am obliged, out of Tenderneſs and Reputation, to conceal the Name of the Family of this Gentleman, who is the Subject of the following Diſcourſe, and could heartily wiſh that my concealing it would make ſo many as do know it, to forget every thing but the Example itſelf, that being only *uſeful*, the reſt *Ignominious*: But I am afraid my Wiſhes will prove ſucceſsleſs, there being *four more Divines*, beſides my ſelf, who were very frequently there, at the beginning of his Sickneſs, beſides ſeveral Gentlemen and others, whoſe Acquaintance, or Deſign of doing Good might lead them thither.

This unhappy Gentleman, who made ſo direful an *Exit* the eighth of this inſtant *December*, had in his youth Time the Advantage of *a Religious and Virtuous Education*; in which it was obſervable, That he made

made a more conſiderable Progreſs than was uſual for ſuch Years, being very warm and active in all Religious Exerciſes: Beſides, he was a great proficient in Learning, being ſent up to the Univerſity from the School where he was educated, very perfect in his *Latin* and *Greek Tongues* at ſixteen Years of Age, where he continued five Years: His Behaviour and Deportment being ſuch that all his Friends and Acquaintance lookt upon him as an *uncommon Bleſſing*, an Ornament to his Family. At the Age of twenty one he came up to Town, and entred himſelf into the Inns of Court, deſigning to ſtudy the Law; his Friends and he concluding it neceſſary, *That thoſe that have Eſtates ſhould have at leaſt ſo much inſight in the Law as to know how to preſerve them.*

Oh that I could proceed with my Character, or at leaſt abruptly break off, and ſay, Here he dyed, *ignorant of the Town and its Vices!* But alas, the Scene is chang'd, and here

we bring another Perſon upon the Stage, *laugh'd and ridicul'd out of his Innocence and Vertue*, by new Acquaintance, and for a long Time together playing the Hypocrite, aſſuming unto himſelf a degree of that Profaneneſs and Impiety he was innocent of, appearing more vile and baſe than he could ſuddenly bring himſelf to be, only to ſecure his Reputation with his Companions, and avoid the uneaſineſs of being a *Common Jeſt*. But this was not the only nor chief Method whereby he was brought to his Apoſtacy, for he had too much Judgment, and too well grounded to be ſhock'd and altered with a *bare Laughter, or a ridiculous Grin*. He would often ſay, "Gentlemen, thoſe that pretend to "Reaſon cannot be ſo bewitched "with the Charms of Mirth as to "think Laughing a good Argument "to confute whatever may be ſaid; "if Religion be ſo unreaſonable a "thing as you'd perſwade me, by "laughing at it, why don't ye give "me

"me ſome fair Reaſons againſt it? Hereupon ſome of the oldeſt ſtanding would ſuggeſt, "That *Mahomet* "has more Votaries than Chriſt: "That that Religion is not without "its Martyrs and Confeſſors; That "the wild Indians dare bravely dye "for their Religion: That there's "no Nation, be it never ſo Barbarous, that gives us not ſome fine "Examples of *Doing and Suffering*; "that therefore its not the Excellency of any one Religion, but "the Prejudices of all, that produces "theſe Effects: That 'tis the Habit "and Cuſtom of Education that "creates the *formidable Notions of* "*Conſcience*, *Heaven*, *Hell*, *Futurity* "and the *Immortality of the Soul*, all "which are but the politick Inventions of Prieſts and cunning Magiſtrates, to enrich themſelves and "keep the Vulgar in Awe, who are "naturally Superſtitious and Fearful: With a deal more to the ſame purpoſe. Such Harangues as theſe did by little and little poyſon the

the Principles of this poor Gentleman, and mould him into the ſame Leaven with themſelves, not only into the *ſame Judgment*, *but liberty of all Profaneneſs*, *Debauchery* and *Injuſtice*, as far as he could act without the Cognizance of the Law. It won't be amiſs to add, That this Gentleman was one of that CLUB which within theſe laſt ſeven Years met together conſtantly, *To lay down ſuch Rules and Methods as that they might be critically wicked in every thing that they could, without the Laws taking hold of them; and therefore the Law itſelf was more particularly examined, What Fallacies might be put upon it; Where and in what Caſes it did not provide againſt unheard of Villanies; What Subterfuges and Evaſions there might be in its Expoſition; with many more like horrid Inſtances, which were all noted down as very uſeful Diſcoveries for the new Candidates of improved Impiety.*

But

But to proceed, This Gentleman's Senſe and Education had furniſh'd him with too much Prudence to lay open himſelf to every Body; he commonly kept a very fair Correſpondence with his Friends, and in all ſtrange Places was very ſober and reſerv'd, Prudence obliging him not to diſcover all he believed, to every Body. Thus he liv'd ſeveral Years, being as *ſecretly wicked* as all Temptations, and the Advantages of a good Eſtate, would ſuffer him: But as *the Wicked do not live out half their Days* by reaſon of their Intemperance and Debaucheries, ſo this Gentleman haſtned his diſmal Period by the like Courſes, falling deſperately ill on the thirtieth of *November* laſt, continuing ſo till the eighth of this inſtant *December*, as we ſaid above.

As ſoon as he found himſelf precipitated by his *ill Courſes* into ſuch a dangerous Sickneſs, he began to be extreamly ſtartled and amazed at the *Apprehenſions of Death* (for he believed

believed he ſhould dye) and in ſpite of all he could do, he could not forbear reflecting upon another Life; and notwithſtanding all his Fortifications to the contrary; he could not confute nor rid himſelf of the Expectation of a Future Retribution. Being thus diſtracted with his Diſtemper and Fears, he threw himſelf upon the Bed, and diſcourſed with himſelf after this manner. *Oh! what's the meaning of this Tumultuous War in my Breaſt? what Argument is there now to aſſiſt me againſt Matter of Fact? Do I aſſert, that there's no Hell at all, and yet I feel one in my Boſom? Am I certain, that there's no Heaven, when I am ſo ſure that there's a Hell? That there is no After-retributions when I feel a preſent Judgment? Do I affirm my Soul to be as Mortal as my Body, when this Languiſhes, and that is as Vigorous as ever? O that any one could reſtore to me my Ancient Guard of Piety and Innocency! But it's too late. Wretch that I am, whither ſhall*

I fly from this Breaſt, or what will become of me?

He had no ſooner ended, but in comes one of *his old Companions*, to pay him a Viſit, for he had heard that he was not well: "How now "Brother (ſays he) why this Me-"lancholy Look and Poſture, you "ſeem to be more concerned in your "Mind than Body? pray tell me "*what's the Matter? The Matter?* replyed the other, fixing a pair of ghaſtly Eyes upon him, "'Tis you, "and the reſt of my Companions, "that have inſtill'd thoſe Principles "into me, which now having moſt "need of them, leave me in the "Agonies of Deſpair and Confuſion. "What Advice or Comfort have "you now to fortifie me againſt "my fearful Expectations of ano-"ther Life? Are you certain that "my Soul is Material and Mortal? "And that it will diſſolve with the "Body? I'm ſo certain, replyed the other, "that I venture my "Whole upon it. Here I inter-

"rupted

rupted them by coming into the Room, and applying my ſelf to the Sick Perſon, I told him, "That "I was a Stranger to him, yet "hearing of his Diſtemper, I "thought it my Duty to pay him "a Viſit, and give him what Chri-"ſtian Comfort and Advice I was "capable of. I Thank you, replyed "the Sick Perſon, and would deſire "you then to engage that Gentle-"man that ſits there (meaning his Friend) "and prove unto him that "the Soul is not Matter, nor Mor-"tal. That the Soul is not Mat-"ter (ſaid I) *Deſcartes* has prov'd "in his *Method*, by ſhewing that "the Soul is *independent of Matter*. "That Matter itſelf cannot think, "neither in the Whole nor its Parts, "is evident enough from Mr. *Lock* "of HUMAN UNDER-"STANDING. But after all "we perhaps can beſt prove it thus; "Matter is by every Philoſopher "granted to be in its own Nature "indifferent to Motion or Reſt: "That

" That if it be in Reſt, it will lye
" eternally ſo, unleſs ſomething
" elſe moves it; and that if any
" thing puts it in Motion, it will
" eternally move, were it not for
" the Oppoſition of other Matter
" which clogs and retards its Mo-
" tion. But thoſe that would
" have the Soul to be a *pure fine*
" *Matter*, ſay, that it firſt moves
" the Animal Spirits, they the
" Nerves, and theſe a Leg, an
" Arm, *&c.* mechanically, as
" Matter moves Matter. Now thoſe
" that make the Soul the firſt Agent
" and Mover, make Matter to move
" itſelf, which is impoſſible, accord-
" ing to the above-cited Theſis,
" which will have Matter to reſt
" eternally, unleſs it be moved by
" ſomething. But the Soul does move
" the Body independent of Matter,
" and Matter cannot move unleſs it
" be firſt moved: Therefore the Soul
" is not Matter, and conſequently
" not periſhable by Attrition, Tran-
" ſmutation, *&c.* But, Gentlemen,

"added I, I hope there's no need "of a Lecture of this Nature to "either of you; for you look like "Creatures that have a ſhare in "Human Nature, which has the "Doctrin of the Immortality of "the Soul innate with it. The ſick Perſon made no other Anſwer than a *diſmal Groan*, as if his Heart had broke, and his Friend alſo made haſte out of the Room, without bidding us *God b'w'e*. I was ſurprized at ſuch an Effect, and deſired the ſick Party to know the Reaſon of his Diſcontent, offering my Aſſiſtance to remove it, if poſſible, by Counſel, Prayers, Advice, or any way that lay in my Power.

"Alas, Sir, replyed he, you've "undeceiv'd me, now its too late; "I was afraid of nothing ſo much "as the Immortality of my Soul; "now you have aſſured me of "that you have aſcertained me of "a Hell, of a fearful Expectation "of Judgment, of a Portion among

"thoſe

"those that have apostatiz'd from "their Religion, of the Lot of "Atheists, and Denyers of Christ: "You have now sealed my Damna- "tion, by giving me an Earnest of "it, I mean an awakened Conscience, "that brings my Sins into my Re- "membrance, reckoning up the "*numerous Catalogue* for which I "must go and give an Account. "Oh Apostate Wretch, from how "great Hopes am I fallen! Oh that "I had never known what Religion "had been, then had I never de- "ny'd my Saviour, nor been so black "an Heir of Perdition. I was so surprized at such kind of Expressi- ons that I stood speechless for a considerable Time, for having re- ceived the Character of a Person that had imbibed some atheistical Principles; I little expected such a *desperate Change*, but rather that I should have an hard Task of it to make him consider seriously of a future Life: But so soon as I could re- collect my self, I said, Sir, I would

desire you to take heed how you violate the *Mercy of God*, and think so slightly of the Sufferings of Christ, as if they were not *sufficient for the Redemption of the greatest Sinner.* This may be a Delusion of the Devil, who would now hinder you from Repentance and Faith in Christ. I hope, if I have convinc'd you of the Immortality of the Soul, 'tis to a good End; for the way to cure a Distemper is first to know it; if you had died ignorant of it, you had been miserably undecived in another World, whereas knowing it now, you have an Opportunity and some time left to prepare for your welfare. To which he repli'd,

"As to the Mercy of God, in "Christ, I once knew and tasted "what they are, which is now "part of my Curse, in that I am "more sensible of the loss of them. "They are, I will grant you, suf-"ficient to those that have any "share in them; but what's that

"to

"to me, who have denied Christ?
"Who have daily Crucified him
"afresh, and put him to open shame?
"The Devil has nothing to do
"with the Torture I undergo; 'tis
"no Delusion of his, but the just
"Judgment of God upon me; and
"your Convictions are also part of
"my heavy Judgment, in that you
"have given me a sensible Horror
"of my Sin, by proving my Soul
"immortal, whereas had I gone
"streight to Hell in my old Dam-
"nable Opinions, I had endured
"but one Hell, whereas I now feel
"two: I mean not only an inex-
"pressible Torture which I carry
"in my Breast, but an Expecta-
"tion of I know not what a
"Change. Oh that I were in Hell,
"that I might feel the worst!
"And yet I dread to Die, be-
"cause that worst will never have an
"end.

All that he spoke, was with *an Air of such horror* and eagerness as can scarce be imagined; indeed it

had such Effects upon me, that I knew not what to answer: I trembled at the Judgment of, and I remember I wisht within my self that one or two of the *loosest Atheists in the Age* had been there, verily believing it would have put a stop to their Impiety. The Gentleman was got to Bed, refusing all Sustenance, and sweating through Violence of his Torments, in the most prodigious manner that ever I saw or heard of. As soon as he was got to Bed, I desired to pray by him before I took my Leave, which with much Reluctance he consented to. *In the midst of Prayer* he groaned extreamly, tossing and turning himself as if he had been under the deepest *Agonies of Death*: When Prayer was over, I ask'd him how he did, and why he groaned after such a rate in Prayer-time? To which he answered, "As the Damned in "Hell, which lift up their Eyes in "Torments, and behold afar off "the Saints in *Abraham*'s Bosome, "have their Torments thereby

„doubly

" doubly enhanſed, firſt by reflect-
" ing on their own Miſery, and then
" taking a proſpect of the Beatifick
" Viſion they have loſt; even ſo, I, who
" know my ſelf to be hardned, and
" ſealed unto Damnation, hearing
" the Prayers of the Righteous, to
" which God Almighty's Ears are
" always open, granting their Re-
" queſts, this encreaſes my Tor-
" ments, to think how I am exclu-
" ded from ſuch a priviledg, and have
" no other Portion left me, but *Bla-*
" *ſpheming, Weeping, and Wailing, and*
" *Gnaſhing of Teeth, for ever.* Pray
Sir, ſaid I, Conſider, that there's a vaſt deal of difference betwixt you and thoſe that are in Hell; they are loſt irrevocably for ever-more, without any opportunity of Reprieve, or hopes of Pardon; but you are yet alive, and have Promiſes belonging to you in common, with other Sinners; *Chriſt died for Sinners*, and God hath Sworn by himſelf, that he *delights not in the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould turn from his Wicked-*

Wickedness and Live; and that at what time soever a Sinner returneth from the Evil of his Ways, he shall receive Pardon. To which he reply'd with his usual earnestness, "I'll grant you as much difference "betwixt me and those that are in "Hell, as betwixt a Common Devil, "and a Devil Incarnate. If these "are irrevocably lost without opportunity of Reprieve, or hopes of "Pardon, and I am yet alive, what "then? what's the Consequence? "not that the Promises belong to "me in common with other Sinners, "nor to any Sinners but such as Repent and Believe: *If Christ dy'd for "Sinners*, 'tis for such as Repent and "Believe; but tho' I would, I can "do neither, I have outstood my "Day of Grace, and am hardned, "and turned Reprobate; *If God "delights not in the Death of Sinners*, "'tis of such Sinners as repent and "return unto him; but his Justice "will vindicate it self upon such obstinate perverse Sinners as I, who

„ have

" have deny'd his Power and Provi-
" dence both in my Words and Acti-
" ons, and now he has met with me
" for it; and oh *'tis a fearful thing*
" *to fall into the hands of the living*
" *God.* If God was not againſt me,
" I ſhould not value it, tho' all the
" Legions of Hell engaged me, tho'
" all the Power and Malice of Men
" joined in one Complicated Body to
" ſtudy and exerciſe the utmoſt Bar-
" barities that Fleſh and Blood could
" inflict upon me; but when an An-
" gry Irreconcilable God looks up-
" on his Creature in Wrath, and
" conſigns him over to his Eternal
" Vengeance and Fury, this is into-
" lerable, inexpreſſibly, afflicting,
" and grievous: Ah *who can dwell in*
" *everlaſting Burnings?* Oh ye that
" have any hope, and have not yet
" paſt your Day of Grace, Cry
" mightily to God, Day and Night;
" think no labour too much which
" ſecures you from the Wrath of
" God: Oh who can ſtand before
" him when he is Angry, what Stub-

" ble

"ble can resist such a Consuming
"Fire? This, and more to the
same purpose, he spake with so deep
a Concern, the Tears trickling all
the while down his Cheeks, that no
Body in the Room could refrain
Weeping, which he perceiving said,
"And can ye Weep at the image and
"bare relation of the effects of Gods
"Wrath, what then do you think I
"suffer, who actually lie under the
"very weight of his Fury? Refrain
"your Tears for me, 'tis in vain;
"Pity is no Debt to me, nothing is
"so proper for me as some Course
"to compleat my Misery, and free
"me from the Torments of my Ex-
"pectation. Here he paus'd a lit-
tle, when looking towards the Fire,
he said, "Oh that I was to lie and
"broil upon that Fire for a Hundred
"Thousand Years to purchase the
"Favour of God, and be Reconci-
"led to him again. But 'tis a fruit-
"less vain Wish, Millions of Milli-
"ons of Years will bring me no
"nearer the ends of my Tortures,

"than

" than one Poor Hour: O Eternity, " Eternity, who can discover the " Abyss of Eternity; who can pro- " perly Paraphrase upon the Words " *for Ever and Ever!*

I could not forbear reflecting on that passage *of broiling upon the Fire a Hundred Thousand Years to purchase the Favour of God, and be again Reconciled to him*; how unproportionable was this Poor Man's Concern to that of the Common Practice of the World, a great part of which will allow no time in Days, Weeks, Years, to seek the Face and Favour of God? And amongst those that pretend to Religion? How cooly and indifferently do they spend that time they set apart for Private or Publick Devotion, Were they sensible but for one Minute of what this Wretched Person endured, what a *Spur would it be to their Devotion*, and how careful would they be to make their *Calling and Election sure*, how fearful, lest having a Promise made them of entring into Rest, any of them

them ſhould fall ſhort through unbelief, and ſo be fruſtrated of their ſhare and hopes of that Glory which is to be revealed?

It began to grow late, ſo I took my leave of him for that Night, promiſing to renew my Viſit, (if it pleaſed God,) the next Day, when I found him ſtill in the ſame Condition, as to his Mind; but his Body was much weakned by his continual Sweats, cauſed by the Agonies he lay under. I found Three or Four Divines with him who had been at Prayer, which they told me, had the ſame uneaſie effect upon him, as when I Prayed with him the Night before. One of the Divines deſired him to conſider the Example of St. *Peter*, who had denied his Maſter with Oaths and Curſes, and yet was received again into his Favour. To which he reply'd, (officiouſly againſt himſelf, as he had done all the Day before,) "'Tis true, St. *Peter* "did deny his Maſter, as I have "done, but what then? his Maſter "had

'had Prayed for him, that his Faith 'ſhould not fail, and being willing 'that he ſhould Repent, he look'd 'him into a Repentance, and aſſiſt-'ed him by his Holy Spirit to per-'fect it; now if Chriſt would aſ-'ſiſt me to Repent, I ſhould do ſo 'too, but he hath juſtly withdrawn 'his Interceſſions from me: I have *ſo 'often Crucified him a freſh, and 'put him to open ſhame, ſo often 'grieved that Holy Spirit*, that God 'has taken it away from me, and in 'the room thereof has left me the 'Spirit of Impenitence and Repro-'bation, and given me a certain 'Earneſt of a *fearful Inheritance* in 'another Life.

He ſpake little more that Day, for a deal of Company preſſing in, it became troubleſome to him, and towards Night Orders were taken for the avoiding ſuch an Inconvenience. There were four more Divines in the Room beſides, at ſix a Clock; we all look'd upon one another, not knowing what courſe to take, no

Text being offered in his favour, but what he readily turned another way; whilſt we were thus Muſing, he Cryed out in a vehement affecting Paſſion, 'How long, oh Lord! ſhall 'thy Wrath burn for ever againſt 'me, ſhall thy Eternal Juſtice for 'ever exact upon a poor deſpicable 'Worm? What is my Value or 'Worth that thou ſhouldſt pour 'out full Vials of Wrath upon me? 'Oh that thou wouldſt let go thy 'Hand, for ever forget me, and let 'me fall into my firſt nothingneſs 'again; as my Righteouſneſs could 'have profited thee nothing, ſo 'my Impieties have done thee no 'hurt, therefore Annihilate me, and 'let me Periſh to nothing; be not 'Angate with me that I thus Expoſtulate with thee; 'twill be but a 'little time but thy Wrath will 'force the Dreadfulleſt Blaſphemies 'from me, except thou prevent 'them: Oh that thou wouldſt take 'away my Being, and my Miſery; 'neither of them can add to, or di-

'miniſh

'minish from thy Happineſs, there-
'fore let them both ceaſe, and let
'my Name be known no more; or
'if I muſt ſtill be, and be Immor-
'tal, and thou wilt Puniſh me, be-
'cauſe I have Deſpiſed thee, let it
'ſuffice to be a Privation of thy
'Self, and let me paſs my Eternity
'in a Dream, without ever being
'awakned by the pangs of Tor-
'ment, without ever being di-
'ſturbed by the Gnawing of the
'*Worm that Dies not*. But Oh what
'fruitleſs Deſires are theſe, for I
'am Expoſtulating with a God that
'has cloſed his Ears, and will not
'hear, with a God that has for ever
'ſhut out my Prayers, and only
'protracts my Breath a little longer
'to be an Example unto others!
'Oh ye Rocks and Mountains, that
'ye would hide me from the pre-
'ſence of an Incenſed God! But
'there's no flying from his preſence,
'what he has begun he will finiſh,
'he will extend his Wrath againſt
'me for ever and ever. Here ſome

Body knocked at the Door, it and proved to be a Penny-Post-Man with a Letter to this Gentleman; which being told him, 'How '(says he) a Letter for me? A lit-'tle longer, and I expect another 'sort of a Messenger, I am (added 'he) very quickly to give up my 'Accounts of every secret Action 'that I have done, and I have a 'mind to make an Experiment of 'something of the same Nature, to 'see how I can bear it; and looking 'about the Room he espy'd me; 'pray Sir, said he, do me the fa-'vour as to open and read this Let-'ter, the Contents I know not, 'but I suspect it to come from some 'of my old Acquaintance. I desi-red to be excused, alledging, that possibly there might be something in it that might be improper to di-vulge. 'Nothing, nothing, re-'ply'd he, can affect me now; I 'have no Honour, no Reputation, 'and what's yet worse, no Heaven 'to lose, by this or any other Act,

'there-

" therefore pray Sir oblige me, or I " muſt trouble ſome Body elſe. Upon this I broke open the Letter, deſigning firſt to take a Curſory View of it, and then to proceed, or deſiſt, according as I found the Contents, which upon peruſal, I thought not impertinent to the preſent Caſe, and therefore Read as follows,

Dearest Sir,

UNderſtanding you are fallen dangerouſly ill, and that it had a Melancholy Effect upon you, I could not, (conſidering our ſtricter Friendſhip) but endeavour at leaſt the removal of thoſe Evil's your Mind may lie under, which perhaps is an Office no leſs grateful, than making your Body Sound and Vigorous. Sickneſs and Death are the common Lot of Mankind, and to Repine and Grieve at the bearing of this Lot, is to Combat the Laws of Nature, and Fight againſt Impoſſibilities; what Wiſe Man Repines at the Heat in Summer, or Cold in Winter, or troubles himſelf, that the Sun ever goes out of

our Hemiſphere all the Night-time? a common Evil that every Body bears, ceaſes to be an Evil, becauſe there's no one has a better Fortune to compare with it, and without compariſon, nothing can be ſaid to be better or worſe; thus alſo a Good made common Palls into Indifferency from the ſame Reaſons. But perhaps your Melancholy ſuggeſts unto you, that 'tis a diſmal thing to Launch out into an unknown Abyſs, to be you know not where, nor what. I Anſwer, I dream ſometimes of frightful things, and the Idea's that I have of them, impreſs as afflicting Reſentments upon my Spirits, as if they were real, but when I awake all vaniſhes. Thus, if we will examine Death, and its ſuppoſed Conſequences, by the Prejudices of a Melancholy and Diſtracted Brain, we may be Miſerable, proportionable to the heighth of our Folly; but if by our Reaſon we take a View of theſe Formidable Monſters, they grow tame and familiar to us. I would demand of him that asks me, What Eſtate I ſhall be in after Death, What Eſtate he was in before Life?

Life? Pain and Pleaſure will leave their Impreſſions upon a Human Spirit; 'tis as natural as Wax to receive the Impreſſion of that Seal by which it is Sealed. Therefore if I was either Happy or Miſerable before I commenced Humanity, I muſt ſtill retain ſome Impreſſion of it, but I now do neither, therefore ſhall do neither hereafter. I came out of a State of Nothingneſs, and ſhall return into the ſame again; as the Flame of an extinguiſhed Candle diſſolves and loſeth it ſelf in the Circumambient Air, even ſo the Taper of Life vaniſhes into pure Æther, and is no more, when the Laws of the Union of the Soul and Body are violated and broken. Death it ſelf is nothing; and after Death there's nothing; and why ſhould I be afraid of nothing? Take Courage, Man, and either Die like your ſelf, Maſter of your Fate and Happineſs, ſo long as it is to be kept; or Recover, and Live Worthy the Character of a Perſon that knows how either to Live, or Die. So wiſhes

Your real Friend and Servant,

A. B.

I had no sooner read this Letter through, but he surpriz'd us all with repeated dismal Groans, as if his Soul had been strugling under the last Throws of Separation: We thought it not convenient to press for the Reason of it, considering that Human Nature feels, or at least supposes an Ease by complaining of the Evil it suffers, and it happened according to our Expectations, for at length he broke out into these afflicting Imprecations: 'Curs'd be the 'Day wherein I commenced such a 'fatal Friendship: Oh unhappy 'Time, when first I imbib'd these 'Atheistical Principles! When first 'I exchanged the Christian Faith for 'the Creed of *Spinoza* and the *Levia-* 'than! When first I relinquish'd 'all *reveal'd Religion* for the *natural* 'one, and the *Last* for *none at all.* When casting his Eyes upon me, he said, 'I am not able to write an 'Answer to that Letter, though I 'earnestly desire there should be one, 'nor is it worth my while to get an

'*Ema-*

'*Emanuenſis* for that purpoſe, for I 'ſuppoſe I ſhall have no occaſion to 'write any more. I'm alſo ſenſible 'that you might be better able to 'anſwer ſuch a Letter than I, and yet 'my preſent Circumſtances are ſuch, '(I being not only a Party, but the 'diſmal ſubject a Matter my ſelf) that 'what comes from me may make a 'deeper impreſſion upon the Spirit 'of my Friend, than what comes 'from a ſtrange Hand; therefore 'you will oblige me, if you will 'only lend me your Hand, and let 'me dictate; which I freely offering, he ordered a Chair to be ſet on the other Side of the Bed, thinking it convenient to be as ſecret and free from Noiſe and Diverſion as poſſibly he could: And then he proceeded.

SIR,

BEing not able to uſe my own, I have borrowed another Hand to anſwer yours, poſſibly I may ſubſcribe my ſelf. You ſay well, Its a gratefuller

Office

Office to endeavour to remove the Evils of the Mind than of the Body. What [illegible] of the common Lot of Man-[illegible] Death and Sickness: I could [illegible] were my Case, but mine alas is [illegible] that I pay dearly for, viz. [illegible] Despair and Hell is the common lot of Atheists. Now your Arguments cannot reach my Case, unless you first prove that Atheism is as inevitable as Death and Sickness, and that therefore the effects of it are to be born patiently, unless a Man will combat Necessity and fight against the Laws of Fate. Your way of arguing is such as I have us'd my self formerly; and I cannot but wonder now how I could think it conclusive: Perhaps I never indeed thought of that, but was pleased with it, because I wish'd it to be true, and because I saw it my Interest that it should be so. If you please I'll just make a Reflection or two upon what you have writ, and then give you my Sentiments of the whole matter. You say, That if we examine Death and its supposed Consequences by our Reason, those formidable

Mon-

Monſters grow tame and familiar: If by our Reaſon you mean either the popular Creed of Atheiſts, or the certain Reaſon of Human Nature; I am ſure thoſe Monſters will be leſs tame and familiar the more you think of them: for ſince no Reaſon diſcovers what an unexperienc'd death is, or the unknown change conſequent thereupon, how can we judg of things that we know not? Reaſon as long as you pleaſe upon things that you are ignorant of, and at laſt you will be as far from Truth and Satisfaction, if not farther, than when you firſt began; like him that demanded a conſiderable Time to tell what God was; and when that was expired he demanded yet a greater; and being ask'd why he did ſo, he replyed, the more he thought, the leſs he knew of him. *It might have been retorted on him, though the ſame Hiſtory gives no account of it; Why then did he petition for means of greater Ignorance and Confuſion? Your Argument is extream weak about a pre-exiſtent and future State; viz. I retain no impreſſion of*

Hap-

Happineſs or Miſery that I had in a pre-exiſtent State, therefore ſhall retain none in a future State. How that's a conſequence in any Rules of Logick I ſee not. Next, you would have me believe upon your bare Word, That Death is nothing, and that after Death there's nothing. Pray how do you know either, having not yet tryed? there are a great many that ſay the contrary. I have only concerned my ſelf as to the rationality of your Letter, that I might induce you to believe I am not melancholy, diſtracted, or prejudic'd in my Reaſon, and I would deſire you to believe it, That what I am going to ſay may not have the leſs credit, becauſe it comes from one under my circumſtances; Its Truth, and whether you will believe me or no, you will at laſt find it to be ſo.

Here he groan'd, and deſired a little intermiſſion, being not only weary with repeating ſo much, but at preſent dejected and confuſed with the unhappy Truths he was about to tell his Friend, and ſo he reſted himſelf for about half an Hour; when calling

calling to me again, he desired we might proceed: Which we did as follows.

If I could force you to believe me I would; all I can do is to deal with you as a reasonable Creature, by opening my Breast to you, and then leaving you at your liberty to act as you please. Whilst we are in Health and Business we may seem to act contrary to our Intentions, and plead for things we believe not; but when we come to dye the Vizard is taken off, and the Man appears as he is, open and plain. This is my Condition therefore I can have neither Interest nor any other Motive in imposing upon my Friends.

Religion (I mean the Christian*) is no fictitious Imposture; Heaven and Hell are real, and the immortality of the Soul is as certain as the existence of the Body; for a Time we have officiously deluded and cheated one another of our Religion and Happiness, and God, who will not always be despised by his Creatures without taking notice of it, has chosen me out as an example to you all, and as a*

Warning to the lazy indifferent Christian: But who, alas, can write their own Tragedy without Tears, or copy out the Seal of their Damnation, without the extremity of Horror? That there's a God I know, because I continually feel the effects of his Wrath: That there's a Hell, I am as certain, having received the earnest of my Inheritance there, in my Breast, where my Tortures are infinitely short of any Expression: That there's a natural Conscience, which is not the effect of a prejudiced Education, I now feel with Horror and Amazement, being continually upbraided by it with the Registry of my Impieties, and a bringing of all my Sins fresh into my remembrance; why God has markt me out for an example of his Wrath and Vengeance rather than you, or any of our Acquaintance, I presume is, because I am the greatest Apostate, having been more religiously educated than any of you, and therefore done greater despite unto the Spirit of Grace, and been the greatest Scandal to Religion. Oh what a presumptuous, egregious piece of Folly

is

is it for Dust and Ashes to contend with their Creator, to question his Justice, his Power, nay his very Being, when at the same Time without this infinite wise God, every such vile Wretch would immediately fall into its Chaos again, being not able to exist one moment without him? What a vile ingratitude is it scurrilously to reflect upon the Christian Religion, when the Author of it dyed to reconcile such Reflectors to himself? And if after all that he has done and suffered to make such Fools happy, they will still deny him and despise the Benefits of his Redemption, what can be expected but that this Intercessor become an angry Judg and consign his Enemies over to the Reward of their Demerits? Don't mistake your self, its not a light Matter to question and contend with the God of Nature, to abuse Religion and deny the Author of it, and what is yet the worst of all, to apostatize and leave the way of Righteousness, as I have done; behold, God hath met with me for it, after a long Forbearance of several Years in inveterate Impiety and Profaneness:

Let me intreat you, by my Example, to leave off your Sins by Repentance; who knoweth but God may yet receive you, and by me preach such a Lecture as may stop you in your Course of Wickedness? I speak not this out of any Love to Vertue or Hatred of Vice, for I am hardned and impenitently reprobate, only herein I imitate Dives, *who was unwilling his Brethren should come into the same place of Torment with him: Make what use you please of this, only remember that if it does not reclaim you, it will double your Condemnation, and enhance your Guilt, possibly to be overtaken in this present World as I am, with the just Judgment of God; if not, be sure you will be light on hereafter: Which is all, and I wish I could say enough. From*

Yours, &c.

As soon

As soon as he subscribed his Name and the Letter was sealed, he desired a Porter might be called and sent, for fear of a Miscarriage; which was done accordingly. And the Night being far worn, we all took our Leaves and left him, wishing him good Rest and a happier Condition the next Day: To which he replyed, 'Gentlemen, I thank you, but my 'Happiness is at an end, and as for 'my Rest to Night, all the Ease I 'expect will be in wishing for the 'Day, as in the Day-time I wish for 'the Night; thus spending the little 'remainder of my miserable Mo-'ments in a fearful expectation of 'my Dissolution, and the dismal 'Account I am to make upon it. But 'Gentlemen a good Night to you, 'and remember my Example, to con-'firm you in that Religion I have 'disowned, that ye may stand more 'cautiously by my Fall, and secure 'the Happiness I have forfeited.

The next day came several of his Friends out of the Country, having

had an account of his Sickneſs and Diſtractions. When they came into the Room, one of them applyed himſelf to him, telling him, That he and ſeveral more of his Relations were come on purpoſe to Town to ſee him, and were extream ſorry to find him in ſuch a weak Condition as he appeared (for now he was almoſt nothing but Skin and Bones, the Agonies that he lay under doing the Office of the quickeſt Conſumption.) To which he anſwered, 'I am obliged, out of common Civility, to 'thank you all; but who are my Relations? Our Saviour ſaid, That 'ſuch only as did the Will of his 'Heavenly Father were his Relations: I may alſo properly ſay, 'That none but the Atheiſt, the Reprobate, and all ſuch as do the 'Work of the Devil are my Relations; this little Tye of Fleſh and 'Blood will be diſſolv'd in a Moment, 'but the Relation I have to the damned is permanent and laſting, the 'ſame Lot, the ſame Place of Tor-

'ments,

'ments, the ſame Exerciſes of Bla-
'ſphemy, and the ſame Eternity of
'Horror will be common to us all;
'ſo that ſimilitude of Torments,
'Place and Duration will joyn us in
'a very ſtrict Union. His Friends, who had only had ſome Report of a kind of Diſtraction, were ſurprized to hear him deliver himſelf in ſuch Terms, and began to enquire of ſome of us what was the matter that he talked at ſuch a rate; who replied, We could wiſh it were Frenzy or Diſtraction, but we were afraid of a much ſadder Cauſe, *viz.* the Senſe of Hell, and God's Wrath upon him, which was ſo violent as to drive him into Deſpair, and the utmoſt Agonies and Horror of Mind, begging, if it might pleaſe God, the caſe might be altered before his Death, which they were ſure could not be far off, if he proceeded as he had begun. He hearing them whiſper, and imagining the Cauſe of it, called them all unto him, and ſaid; 'You may 'imagin me diſtracted or melancholy,

'I

'I wish I were either; but it's part
'of my Judgment, that I am not; no,
'my Apprehension of Persons and
'Things is rather more vigorous and
'quick than it was when I was in
'perfect Health: And it is my Curse,
'because I am thereby more sensible
'of my Unhappiness and the Condi-
'tion I am fallen into. Would you
'be informed why I am become a
'Skeleton in three or four Days?
'Why, my Grief does continually
'extort some unhappy Expressions
'from me: Know then that I have
'sinned against the Holy Ghost, and
'done despite to the Spirit of Grace;
'that I have despised my Maker, and
'denied my Redeemer; that in
'short I have apostatized from the
'Christian Religion, and joined my
'self to the Atheist and Prophane,
'and continued this Course under
'many Convictions, till my Iniqui-
'ty was ripe for Vengeance, and the
'just Judgment of God overtook me,
'when my Security was the greatest
'and the Checks of my Conscience

'the

'the leaſt. Since I denied that Sal-
'vation that comes by Chriſt Jeſus,
'there is no other Mediator or Inter-
'ceſſor for Sinners; if there be,
'who is he that can redeem my Soul
'from Hell, or give a Ranſom for
'my Life? No, no, the Scripture
'is certainly true, and that ſays,
'*That if we ſin wilfully, after we have*
'*received the Knowledg of the Truth,*
'*there remaineth no more Sacrifice for*
'*Sin, but a fearful looking for of Judg-*
'*ment, and fiery Indignation, which*
'*ſhall conſume the Adverſary.* There
'remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sin,
'that's the Wound that pierces my
'Soul: Chriſt Jeſus was the only
'expiatory Sacrifice for Sinners that
'God would accept of; and I not
'accepting (I would ſay,) and I
'deſpiſing this, there now re-
'mains no other for me to accept
'of, no other to make an At-
'tonement and Satisfaction for
'me, *There's no other Name un-*
'*der Heaven given whereby we may be*
'*ſaved, but by the Name of Jeſus;*

'and

'and 'tis this Jesus that I have Re-
'proached, Ridiculed, and Abused,
'in his Members here; nor is this
'all, I have not been content to do
'this my self, but by my Example
'have induced others to do the
'same. Methinks your Breasts are
'all open to me, and in the midst of
'your Pity and Surprizals, you
'would bid me Hope, Believe, and
'Return and Supplicate that Mercy
'I have abused; that Jesus came to
'save Sinners, and to bring them to
'Repentance, with other things of
'this nature. I know that these
'are your thoughts, and by menti-
'oning them I have saved you the
'Labour: Alas, how fain would I
'Hope and Believe! Can a Man in
'Torments not desire to be freed
'from them? No, assure your selves,
'I would upon any Terms, but the
'Displeasure and Wrath of God,
'obstruct the Power of Hoping
'and Believing; and though I
'would, I can do neither, nor do
'I know what some Divines mean,
'that

'that say, He that desires to Hope, Repent, and Believe, in some measures does it: I experience the contrary; a fruitless Wishing that comes not to Act, is no more but a Conviction, which shall bring such Persons under greater Damnation. Would you have me to Return and Supplicate that Mercy I have Abused? Alas! how sad is my Case, that have no other hopes but what depend upon Abused Mercy? But why said I hopes? When I have no hopes at all, my hopes are frustrate, and my expectations are cut off, and what remains behind? why, I am bid to Hope and Believe; Oh what Satyr, what Mockery and Abuse is this upon me, to find me in Misery, and bid me be Happy, without affording me some power of being so! Indeed should Jesus Christ say so much to me, it would be some Comfort; but for you to do it, is the same thing, as to bid a Malefactor shake off his

'Chains

'Chains and Fetters, and assume his 'Liberty; or to call upon the 'Dead to arise out of their Graves, 'and Challenge their Estates and 'Honours again. How idle is it, 'to bid the Fire not to burn, when 'Fuel is administred; to command 'the Seas to be Smooth and Calm in 'the midst of Storms, such is my 'Case, and such are the Comforts 'of my Friends: But I'm spent, and 'can Complain no more; would to 'God the Cause of my Complaints 'would also cease; the Cause of my 'Complaints! This renews my 'Grief, and summons up the little 'strength I have left to Complain 'again, like an extinguishing Flame 'that recollects at once all its Ali-'mentary Matter for one great 'Blaze before it expires. 'Tis just 'so with me: But whether am I go-'ing? As he said this, he fainted away, and lay in a sort of Swound for a considerable time, but by the help of some *Spirits* we brought him to himself again, and as soon as he opened

opened his Eyes, he said, "Oh cruel "and unkind Friends, to awake me "from a Dream in which I had a "Cessation from my Tortures, but "now they return again, and Prey "upon my Soul like so many Furies. This he spoke with so feeling and lively Concern, that not one of his Relations could refrain from Tears, none of them being able to speak to him for a considerable time before; "You weep, says he, but your ve-"ry Tears come too late; was I "like another Person that goes out "of the World, it would be one of "my greatest Troubles to see you "Weep, or at least, it would add "much to my pains; for he must be "unnatural and senseless that could "not be moved and troubled at the "affliction of others, especially his "Friends and Relations; but the "Case is otherwise with me, my "Cup is full, and already runs over, "the bitterness of my Soul is as "great as possible it can be in this "World, and my Heart is full of

"Horror and Anguiſh, and no "Grief can add unto mine, being "already ſo great, that 'tis uncapa- "ble of receiving any more. Per- "haps, this may ſeem a Paradox to "you at firſt, but what think you of "Time and Eternity? Can one add "an Hour to Eternity, which com- "prehends and ſwallows all Time? "Can one add any thing to the Wrath "of God, which includes the Fury "of Devils and Men, this being de- "rivative and dependent on that, "and can any one add to my Grief "and Tortures, who am *fallen into "the hands of the living God*? No, "no, reſerve your Tears for your "Sins, and caſt them not away ſo "fruitleſly upon one that is neither "the better nor worſe for them.

You may eaſily imagine what impreſſions ſuch Sayings as theſe made upon the Spirits of his Friends, who were almoſt overwhelmed with Grief and Amazement, with Grief, at the lamentable State of their Kinſman, and with Amazement at the dreadful Judg-

Judgment of God upon him. But in the midſt of their Sorrows they had the Prudence to think of the Reputation of their Family, and to provide for as much Secrecy as they poſſibly could in ſuch a Caſe; for the Rumor of a Man in Deſpair beginning to ſpread, they conveyed him by Night to other Lodgings; but he was grown ſo very weak, that notwithſtanding the Care of thoſe who conveyed him in the Chair, it had like to have proved fatal to him; for he fainted away ſeveral Times, but they got him into his Chamber and to Bed as ſoon as they could: After a little Reſt he yet found ſo much ſtrength as to expreſs himſelf thus: 'I am not concerned to enquire whi-'ther you have brought me, or your 'Reaſons for ſo doing; it had been 'ſomething if you had brought my 'Perſon hither without my Horrors 'and accuſing Conſcience, or if you 'had changed my unhappy State with 'my Lodgings; but my Torments 'are rather the greater than before,

'for I ſee that diſmal Hour is ap-'proaching and juſt at hand, when I 'ſhall bid you all a ſad Farewel. The Doctors that had been with him in the beginning of his Sickneſs were again ſent for, and they yet declared they could do nothing, ſo long as the Diſturbance of his Mind was the Cauſe of his Weakneſs, only they ordered him ſome Cordial Julips, which they ſaid might perhaps ſtrengthen his Nature, ſo that he might live two or three Days longer. My Buſineſs called me away for a Day or two, and I came again upon *Thurſday* Morning pretty early, the Day of his Death. When I came into the Room I enquired of his Friends how he had ſpent his Time? who had been with him, what Diſcourſe or Expreſſions had dropt from him? And they told me in general, he had little Company, and that his Expreſſions were much ſhorter than before, being now unable to ſpeak many words together; yet that what he did ſpeak, ſeemed to have more Horror

and

and Deſpair in it than formerly. Afterwards I went to his Bed-ſide, and ſaw *perfect death* in his Face, mixt with ſuch Amazement and Anguiſh, that it was the ſaddeſt Spectacle I ever ſaw in all my Life-time. I askt him how he did? To which he reply'd, "*Damn'd and loſt for ever.* I deſired him not to entertain ſuch a Thought; the Decrees of God were ſecret, and God might puniſh him thus, in this life, to make him fit for a better. "They are not (ſaid he) ſecret to "me, but diſcovered for my greater "Torment; and my Puniſhment "here is for an Example to others, "and for an Earneſt to me of my own "Damnation. Oh that there was no "God, or that this God could ceaſe "to be; for I am ſure he will never "have Mercy upon me. Alas, ſaid I, there's no contending with our Creator, therefore forbear ſuch words as may provoke him more. "True "(reply'd he) there's no contend-"ing; I wiſh there were a poſſibility "of getting above God, that would

'be a Heaven to me. I entreated him not to entertain such a Blasphemy, for——Here he interrupted me, saying, 'Read we not in the *Revelations*, of those that blasphem'd God 'because of their pains? I am now of 'that number. Oh how do I envy 'the happiness of *Cain* and *Judas*! But (reply'd I) you are yet alive, and do not feel the Torments of those that are actually in Hell. 'To which he 'answer'd, This is either true or 'false; if it be true, what are my 'expectations, and how heavy will 'my Torments be, if I yet not feel 'the uttermost? But I know that 'tis 'false, and that I now endure more 'than the Spirits of the damn'd in 'Hell; for I have the very same Tortures upon my Spirit, as they have, 'besides the Torments I endure in my 'Body. I believe that at the day of 'Judgment, the Torments of my 'Mind and Body will be both of 'em 'more intense; but as I am now, no 'Spirit in Hell endures what I do: 'How gladly would I change my con-

'dition

'dition for Hell! And how earneſtly 'would I intreat of my angry Judge 'to ſend me thither, if I was not a-'fraid that he would out of venge-'ance deny me? Here he clos'd his Eyes a little, and began to talk idly and beſides himſelf, every now and then *groaning and gnaſhing his Teeth*; but when he open'd his Eyes and lookt about, he grew ſenſible again, and felt for his own Pulſe, ſaying, '*How 'lazily my Minutes paſs on!* When will 'be the laſt Breath, the laſt Pulſe, that 'ſhall beat my Spirit out of this de-'cay'd Manſion into thoſe deſir'd Re-'gions of Death and Hell? Oh! I 'find 'tis juſt at hand; and what ſhall 'I now ſay? I'm now afraid again to 'die. Ah the forlorn Hope, the de-'ſtitute State of an *Atheiſt* that has 'no God to go to, nothing to fly to for 'Peace or Comfort! Here his Speech fail'd him again; and we all believ-ing him to be juſt a leaving the World went to Prayer, which threw him into an Agony, in which, tho' he could not ſpeak perfectly, he made what

what noiſe he could to hinder himſelf from hearing, and turn'd away his Face that he might not ſee the Action; which we perceiving, we recommended him to the Mercy of God, and gave over. His Speech return'd not again for a conſiderable time, but he fixt his Ghaſtly Eyes upon us, and by the Air of his Countenance ſhew'd, that we had not a little diſoblig'd him: And as ſoon as he cou'd ſpeak, he ſaid, "Tygers and Monſters, are ye alſo become Devils "to Torment me, and give me a "Proſpect of Heaven, to make my "Hell the more intollerable? Alas, Sir, reply'd I, what Intereſt can we have in making you miſerable? 'Tis our deſire of your recovery and reconciliation with God, that caſts us down at the Throne of Grace; if we muſt not ſeek aſſiſtance at the hand of God, where elſe ſhould we ſeek it? If God denies; who elſe can give it? If he will not have Mercy; whether muſt we go for it? To which he reply'd, "Ay that's the

'Wound,

" Wound, God is become my Ene-
" my, and there is none so strong as
" he to deliver me out of his Hand;
" he consigns me over to his Eternal
" Wrath and Vengeance, and there
" is none that is able to Redeem
" me. Was there another God as
" Mighty as he who would Patro-
" nize my Cause, or was I above,
" or Independent of God, then I
" could Act and Dispose of my
" self as I pleased, then would my
" Horrors cease, and the Expectati-
" on and Designs of my Formida-
" ble Enemy be frustrate; but this
" cannot be, for I —— Here his Voice failed him again, and he began to struggle and gasp for a little Breath, which having recovered, with a Groan so Dreadful and Loud, as if it had not been Humane, he Cried out, " *Oh the insufferable Pangs* " *of Hell and Damnation!* and so he Died, Death setling the Visage of his Face in such a Form, as if the Body, tho' Dead, was *sensible of the Extremity of Torments.* How

God

God disposed of him we know not; *Secret things belong to the Lord*, to us Charity and Hope; yet not so much as to make this no Example to us, for such Instances are signalized on purpose to Teach us Fear and Reverence, to Judg our selves, and use the utmost Diligence and Care to make our Calling and Election sure.

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